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Digest of Significant Classification Appeal Decisions

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**Preface**

In this issue of the Civilian Personnel Management Service (CPMS) ***Digest of Significant Classification Appeal Decisions***, we present synopses of several noteworthy classification appeal decisions. We have selected cases that we believe illustrate a complex or troublesome classification issue, and we have briefly described the manner in which the issue was resolved. While the intent of the ***Digest*** is to increase classification consistency within the Department of Defense, ***Digest*** articles are not intended to restrict the use of classification judgment in situations where the guidance is not applicable. Rather, our articles present what we consider sound classification rationale used in a specific case. That rationale may or may not be appropriate for all similar cases.

The ***Digest*** is not intended to supersede Office of Personnel Management classification standards. In no case should a ***Digest*** article be viewed as an alternative to reading and properly discerning the overall intent of standards.

We welcome your comments and suggestions for improving future issues of the ***Digest***. Since the articles describe final appeal decisions, we cannot entertain rebuttals. Please send your comments and suggestions to: Civilian Personnel Management Service, Field Advisory Services Division (FAS), Classification Branch, 1400 Key Boulevard, Suite B-200, Arlington, VA 22209-5144. Should you have any questions, please call us at (703) 696-6301, Team 2, or DSN 426-6301, Team 2. Our e-mail address is [classification@cpms.osd.mil](mailto:classification@cpms.osd.mil). This digest is also accessible through our web page, <http://www.cpms.osd.mil/fas/class&pay.htm>

<b>Case Number</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Standard</b>	<b>OPM General Schedule Leader Grade Evaluation Guide, Part II (April 1998)</b>
<b>Factor</b>	<b>Coverage</b>
<b>Issue</b>	<b>Crediting minimum leader authorities</b>
<b>Other References</b>	<b>N/A</b>

## **Identification of the Classification Issue**

In this appeal, the appellant was considered a leader/senior technician over five General Supply Specialists, GS-2001. The appellant's position description identified the position as a "team leader", and included responsibility for providing technical guidance and training in procedures and methods to team members, assisting team members in resolving problems and issues, and working with them to assure that actions were completed on time. CPMS applied the newly issued General Schedule Leader Grade Evaluation Guide to the position based on duties and responsibilities actually performed by the appellant and assigned by management.

## **Resolution**

Part II of the General Schedule Leader Grade Evaluation Guide (GSLGEG) provides classification grading criteria for team leader positions whose primary purpose is, as a regular and recurring part of their assignment (and at least 25% of their duty time), to lead a team of other General Schedule employees in accomplishing two-grade interval work. At a minimum, this leadership must include the first seven and a total of fourteen out of the twenty leadership duties listed in the Guide.

CPMS considered the first seven of these duties as follows:

- 1. Ensure that the organization's strategic plan, mission, vision, and values are communicated to the team and integrated into the team's strategies, goals, objectives, work plans, and work products and services.* CPMS determined that this responsibility was not exercised by the appellant. While the appellant provided leadership to the other specialists on his team, that leadership was generally limited to technical matters, and involved researching work-related problems, providing technical interpretations, and monitoring the work of other employees. None of the appellant's responsibilities involved the integration of the organization's strategic plan or mission, vision, or values (or equivalent) into the team's work plans, goals, objectives, or work products, or communicating them to the other employees.
- 2. Articulate and communicate to the team the assignment, project, problem to be solved, actionable events, milestones, and/or program issues under review, and deadlines, and timeframes for completion.* This duty was performed by the appellant. As the lead specialist in the unit, he was responsible for communicating to the team specific work assignments, projects, or other work requirements and expected completion dates.
- 3. Coach the team in the selection and application of appropriate problem solving methods and techniques, provide advice on work problems, practices, and procedures, and assist the team and/or individual members in identifying the parameters of a viable solution* CPMS determined that the appellant's responsibilities as the senior technical specialist for the division met the intent of this duty. Specifically, the appellant was expected to assist the other specialists in resolving work-related problems and to advise on appropriate work methods and procedures.
- 4. Lead the team in: identifying, distributing and balancing workload and tasks among employees in accordance with established work flow, skill level, and/or occupational specialization; making adjustments to accomplish the workload in accordance with established priorities to ensure timely accomplishment of assigned team tasks; and ensuring that each employee has an integral role in developing the final team product.* CPMS did not credit this responsibility. The nature of the appellant's leadership involved actually identifying, distributing, and balancing workload and assignment among the employees (in consultation with the supervisor), rather than leading the team in those efforts. For this duty statement, the standard

requires a level of participation and interaction among the team members that was not exhibited in the appellant's work situation. In this case, the appellant functioned in a traditional leadership role, making decisions regarding workload and priorities independently (or with the supervisor), rather than leading the team in the exercise of those functions.

5. *Train or arrange for the training of team members in methods and techniques of team building and working in teams to accomplish tasks or projects, and provide or arrange for specific administrative or technical training necessary for accomplishment of individual and team tasks* CPMS did not credit this responsibility. Although the appellant was responsible for providing training to the other specialists, this training was limited to specific, work-related functions, and did not include training in methods and techniques of team building and teamwork.

6. *Monitor and report on the status and progress of work, checking on work in progress and reviewing completed work to see that the supervisor's instructions on work priorities, methods, deadlines, and quality have been met.* This duty was performed by the appellant.

7. *Serve as coach, facilitator, and/or negotiator in coordinating team initiatives and in consensus building activities among team members.* CPMS determined that the appellant coordinated the work assignments in the division, but was not required to facilitate, coach, or negotiate in coordinating the kind of team initiatives and activities required by the GSLGEG. CPMS did not credit this responsibility.

Because the appellant did not exercise ALL of the first seven authorities and responsibilities listed in Part II of the GSLGEG, his position was excluded from coverage, and could not be evaluated as a Team Leader. The criteria in Part II of the Guide applies to a specific kind of leadership, predicated on a different organizational approach to the accomplishment of work; i.e., a team approach. While this kind of approach does not necessarily require the application of any specific brand of organizational or management philosophy, it does presume the application of team building skills and techniques (group facilitation, coordination, coaching, problem solving, integration of work processes, etc.). Therefore, in determining whether a position meets the minimum coverage requirements for evaluation as a Team Leader, there must be evidence of a team approach in the organization's work processes, as well as an organizational structure supportive of a team environment. The performance of the specific duties listed in the Guide are indicators of such an environment and structure, and must be present in positions classified as Team Leaders. Although the appellant clearly served as a recognized leader in his organization, the absence of the minimum team leader responsibilities showed that the position did not fall within the definition of "team leader" as defined by the GSLGEG. CPMS addressed the leadership duties performed by the appellant by using appropriate subject matter classification standards.

<b>Case Number</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Standard</b>	<b>OPM General Schedule Supervisory Guide (April 1998)</b>
<b>Factor</b>	<b>Coverage/Factor 3, Supervisory and Managerial Authority Exercised</b>
<b>Issue</b>	<b>Applying GSSG criteria to a subordinate military workforce</b>
<b>Other References</b>	<b>N/A</b>

### **Identification of the Classification Issue**

This appeal involved the application of the General Schedule Supervisory Guide (GSSG) to a position that supervised four military mail clerks, in addition to a variety of nonsupervisory duties. The appellant's position description reflected responsibility for establishing performance standards, making or reviewing formal appraisals, conducting performance feedback sessions, ensuring subordinates received appropriate training, providing technical assistance, making work assignments, approving leave, exercising disciplinary control, resolving minor complaints, enforcing safety, housekeeping, and security standards, supporting quality improvement initiatives and equal opportunity objectives, and taking action to eliminate situations that could cause complaints. In order to determine whether the appealed position met the GSSG coverage criteria, CPMS required evidence that the necessary authorities were fully delegated to and exercised by the appellant, in view of the fact that the appellant's subordinates were exclusively military.

### **Resolution**

The GSSG is used to grade GS supervisory work that involves combined technical and administrative direction of others, constitutes a major duty occupying at least 25 percent of the position's time, **and** meets at least the lowest level of Factor 3 (Supervisory and Managerial Authority Exercised) in the Guide, based on supervising Federal civilian employees, Federal military or uniformed service employees, volunteers, or other noncontractor personnel.

CPMS first verified that the appellant exercised both technical and administrative direction over his subordinates, and that his supervisory responsibilities comprised at least 25 percent of his duty time. The four subordinate military personnel were of enlisted rank, performing work equivalent to the GS-4 level. CPMS then considered the nature of the supervisory and managerial authorities exercised by the appellant.

In order to meet the lowest level of Factor 3 in the GSSG (Factor Level 3-2), positions must meet criteria stated in levels 3-2a, 3-2b, or 3-2c. Level 3-2c's requirements were applicable to the appealed position. In order to meet this level, supervisors must carry out at least three of the first four, and a total of six or more of the ten listed authorities and responsibilities. CPMS determined that the appellant regularly performed duties 1-4, 6, 8, 9, and 10, described at Level 3-2c in the GSSG. Of particular importance to CPMS was evidence that the appellant actually developed performance standards and served as the rating official for his military subordinates. As a civilian, the appellant did not have authority to interview candidates, or recommend appointment, promotion, or reassignment to positions in his unit (Duty #5). Nor did he have authority to effect disciplinary measures (Duty #7). Nevertheless, he did exercise sufficient authority for coverage under the GSSG.

<b>Case Number</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Standards</b>	(a) OPM Introduction to the Position Classification Standards (b) OPM Operating Manual, Federal Wage System, Subchapter S11, Special Wage Schedules (September 1996) (c) OPM PCS for Engineering Technician, GS-802 (June 1969)
<b>Factor</b>	N/A
<b>Issue</b>	Identifying Production Facilitating Positions (WDWN); Distinguishing between FWS and Classification Act (GS) positions
<b>Other References</b>	5 U.S.C. 5102 (c)(7)

### **Identification of the Classification Issue**

Over a period of several months, CPMS accepted several appeals from employees whose positions were formerly classified as Planners and Estimators, under the Production Facilitating (WD/WN) pay plan. The appellants' positions were locally determined to be in the General Schedule, and classified as Engineering Technicians, GS-802. The appellants believed the original pay plan determination was correct, and that their positions should have remained classified as Planners and Estimators. The appealed positions were located in installation public works activities, and were assigned such duties as preparing engineering contracts, projects, and reports; preparing job orders; and planning and estimating cost of maintenance, repair, alterations, and construction projects, to include those requiring mechanical, electrical and utility work.

### **Resolution**

According to the Federal Wage System Operating Manual, the WD/WN Pay Plan established for production facilitating positions applies only to Federal Wage System employees engaged in production facilitating operations, such as Planners and Estimators, Aircraft Examiners, Maintenance Schedulers, Production Shop Planners, etc. Positions in the General Schedule are specifically excluded from the Production Facilitating Pay Plan. Therefore, before CPMS could determine whether the appealed positions could be subject to the Production Facilitating Pay Plan, it was necessary to determine whether they were covered by the General Schedule or by the Federal Wage System (FWS).

5 U.S.C. 5102 (c)(7) exempts from coverage under the General Schedule those "employees in recognized trades or crafts or other skilled mechanical crafts, or in unskilled, semi-skilled, or skilled manual-labor occupations ... in positions having trade, craft, or laboring experience and knowledge as the paramount requirement." A position is also exempt from the General Schedule if its primary duty involves the performance of physical work which requires knowledge or experience of a trade, craft, or manual-labor nature.

CPMS determined that the primary purpose of the positions was to plan and estimate hours, material, and type of repair and maintenance for public works projects at the installation. Duties included reviewing customer job orders, developing statements of work, and visiting work areas to determine project scope and to explain processes to customer. The appellants also prepared detailed cost estimates for labor, material, and equipment/machinery for each project; reviewed contractors' proposals for completeness, accuracy, and reasonableness and resolved differences during contractor/agency negotiation; and provided technical guidance during contractors' operations on the projects. Additionally, they developed five-year plans that identified discrepancies and corrective action in the public works areas. Sample projects provided by the appellants included replacement of bearings and shafts in air handling units, renovating installation buildings such as hangars, gyms and auditoriums, conducting preventive maintenance on air conditioning units, installing security lighting, repairing storm drains and swimming pools, and installing exhaust fans, water lines, and speakers.

CPMS factfinding confirmed the appellants' primary responsibilities required knowledge of a variety of trades operations. The appellants and their supervisors attested that previously obtained trades or crafts experience and knowledge were desirable elements for the positions, and that each appellant did, in fact, possess considerable experience in a particular trades area, such as painting, carpentry, electricity, mechanics, heating/air conditioning, etc. However, CPMS determined that the appellants regularly and successfully prepared cost estimates and handled projects involving a variety of trades other than those in which they possessed training and experience. For example, although appellants had previously served as journey level sheetmetal workers, pipefitters, welders, or woodcrafters, they handled projects involving air conditioning, electrical, plumbing, and welding requirements, or electrical, mechanical, and plumbing work

requirements. In this regard, CPMS concluded that formal trade experience was not, in fact, a prerequisite to performing the planning and estimating duties of the appealed positions. While the appellants' trades backgrounds facilitated their work,

CPMS determined that the positions actually required a more limited level of trades knowledge than that found in Federal Wage System positions. Rather than knowledge and skill to perform journey level masonry, electrical, plumbing, carpentry, and other areas necessary to complete assigned public works projects CPMS found that the positions performed work of an oversight nature, requiring a level of technical knowledge such as that found in such General Schedule occupations as the Engineering Technician Series, GS-802, or the Electronics Technician Series, GS-856. Moreover, CPMS confirmed that the appellants were not required to perform any hands-on trade or craft work on a regular basis.

Inasmuch as a requirement for trade or craft experience and knowledge was not the most important, or chief requirement for performing the appellants' primary duties, and the appellants did not perform hands-on trade or craft work, the appealed positions did not meet the criteria for exemption from the General Schedule. Thus, the positions were ineligible for coverage under the special pay plan for production facilitating positions. CPMS determined that the appropriate General Schedule occupational series for the appealed positions was Engineering Technician, GS-802.

<b>Case Number</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Standards</b>	(a) OPM Series Definition for Physician's Assistant, GS-603 (b) OPM PCS for Nurse Series, GS-610 (June 1977) (c) OPM PCS for Medical Officer Series, GS-602 (March 1973)
<b>Factor</b>	N/A
<b>Issue</b>	Determining appropriate grading criteria for Physician's Assistant, GS-603, positions
<b>Other References</b>	OPM Introduction to the Position Classification Standards; The Classifier's Handbook

### **Identification of the Classification Issue**

In this case, the appellant disputed the application of the criteria in the Nurse series, GS-610, to determine the grade level of his position. Stating that physician's assistants perform tasks much more similar to those performed by physicians than by nurses, the appellant believed that the grading criteria in the Medical Officer, GS-602 standard most appropriate for determining the grade of his position. The appellant further referenced the position classification standard for the Nurse, GS-610 series, citing that standard's guidance regarding differences between nurse and physician's assistant positions. The appellant believed his argument was strengthened with the GS-610 standard's statement that physician's assistants require a broad background of medical knowledge and skills, rather than a professional knowledge of nursing.

### **Resolution**

When OPM has not provided specific grading criteria to evaluate the work of a position, other standards should be selected that contain criteria for related kinds of work. Specifically, the chosen criteria should be comparable in scope and difficulty to the position to be classified, and should describe similar subject matter and functions. The qualifications required to do the work of the position and those of the related work should also be similar. Thus, professional positions should be evaluated by standards for professional

work, administrative duties by criteria for administrative occupations, technical work by standards involving similar factors and skill levels, etc. In rare cases the most appropriate grading criteria for a position will be found within the standard for a different occupational category, such as the case when the standard for a professional occupation provides the most analogous evaluation criteria for a nonprofessional position. For example, the Engineering Technician, GS-802, standard directs classifiers to the grade-level criteria in appropriate standards for professional engineering positions when evaluating engineering technicians that clearly exceed the GS-11 grade level. In all cases, however, caution and sound classification judgment are essential, along with a clear understanding of the full intent of the criteria being used.

Physician's assistants perform duties that are similar to those of both medical officers and nurses. However, as indicated by its title, the role of the physician's assistant is to assist a physician by providing diagnostic and therapeutic medical care and services. The medical officer occupation involves essentially unlimited assignments, except for the specialty areas in which individual physicians work, commensurate with a requirement for years of extensive formalized training and experience. CPMS factfinding determined that the work in the appealed position did not include the full scope of interpretation of medical findings equivalent to that performed by fully licensed physicians. Physician's assistants require significantly less training and experience than medical officers; hence, they are not required to recognize all the manifestations of certain diseases or conditions, or possess the skill to develop as thorough or effective therapeutic techniques and procedures.

CPMS determined that the academic preparation required of physician's assistants is not typical of either nurses or medical officers. However, comparison of selected academic programs for the three occupations revealed that the breadth of education and experience demanded of physician's assistants paralleled that prescribed for nurses more closely than for medical officers.

Thus, CPMS concluded that a more appropriate analogy exists between the work performed by and the training required of nurses and physician's assistants than medical officers and physician's assistants. Similar to physician's assistants, nurses typically assist physicians in private practice, clinics, surgicenters, emergency medical centers, and health maintenance organizations. Both occupations involve conducting and/or preparing patients for and assisting with examinations, administering injections and medications, and assisting with minor surgery. CPMS therefore selected the Nurse series for cross-series comparison in the classification of the appellant's work. CPMS pointed out in the appeal decision that there was no intent to imply that work performed by physician's assistants met the coverage criteria of the Nurse series, or was there any implied limitation to possible grade level determinations through application of the grading criteria.

<b>Case Number</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Standard</b>	<b>OPM PCS for Contracting Series, GS-1102 (March 1990)</b>
<b>Factor</b>	<b>Factor 1, Knowledge Required by the Position</b>
<b>Issue</b>	<b>Crediting FL 1-8</b>
<b>Other References</b>	<b>N/A</b>

#### **Identification of the Classification Issue**

The appellant in this case served as a warranted Administrative Contracting Officer. His position description of record matched BMK GS-1102-13-02 nearly word-for-word, although the local activity had

classified the position at the GS-12 level. The appellant believed his position should have been credited at FL 1-8 instead of FL 1-7, because of his authority as Administrative Contracting Officer, and responsibility for cost type, complex, multi-year procurements. As examples of his most complex contracts, the appellant described a missile system that had been in the Navy and NATO inventory for approximately 20 years. The current contract was awarded over 10 years ago, for about 30 million dollars. Current efforts under the contract included system repairs and maintenance, spares acquisition, configuration upgrade from analog to digital technology, and targeting upgrades. As a second example, the appellant described a long term 51 million dollar contract to construct a complex geophysical satellite, with options for additional satellites. The appellant's additional examples were contracts for second generation upgrades to instrument packages for a major NASA space telescope program. Each upgrade was funded at 99 million dollars and had been recently completed.

### **Resolution**

Level 1-8 in the GS-1102 standard requires mastery of contracting methods and contract types to plan and carry on long-term preaward and/or postaward procurement actions. Level 1-8 can also be met if positions require mastery of the procurement functional area sufficient to apply experimental theories and new developments to problems not susceptible to treatment by accepted methods, to extend existing contracting techniques, and to develop procurement policies for use by other contracting personnel. As a third option, Level 1-8 can be met if positions apply a mastery of procurement principles and technical or program requirements to plan and manage or make decisions or recommendations that significantly affect the content, interpretation, or development of complex, long-range, or interrelated agency policies or programs concerning the management of procurement matters.

Critical to the correct application of position classification standards is an understanding of the full intent of a particular factor or grade level. Simply matching the duties of a position to words, phrases, or illustrations in the standards can lead to inappropriate interpretation and inaccurate grade level determinations. It is extremely important, therefore, to understand the full context of the criteria provided for a particular factor level or grade level. Moreover, it is essential to view illustrations and examples within the full context of the grading criteria for which they are provided.

In this case, CPMS concluded that the appealed position did not meet the full intent of Level 1-8. CPMS determined that responsibility for planning and carrying out long-term preaward and/or postaward procurement actions, does not automatically warrant crediting Level 1-8. It is conceivable that even the simplest contractual arrangement could be made over the long term. More importantly, underlying the Level 1-8 grading criteria, examples, and illustrations is a common requirement to handle contracting actions of exceptional difficulty, complexity, and scope. This level of difficulty is such that anything less than demonstrated mastery of contracting methods and contract types would be insufficient for successful performance. For example, postaward contract administration at Level 1-8 involves monitoring systems contracts that extend over several years, and cover research, development, testing and/or production of complex equipment systems. Such contracts require monitoring the performance of the prime contractor and a large number of subcontractors, negotiating forward pricing rates and claims, complex changes and termination or contract close out. In this regard, CPMS acknowledged that the appellant's contracts were complex and important, but that they fell short of the very high level of complexity envisioned at Level 1-8. While the appellant was required to maintain knowledge of the contractors' business systems, and while his contracts covered several years, the responsibility did not include that for a prime contractor and large numbers of subcontractors. Moreover, the contractual support for the programs cited by the appellant was limited to such functions as repair, maintenance, acquiring spare parts, and second generation upgrades, which did not involve significant work with new technology.



CPMS credited the appealed position at Level 1-7.

<b>Case Number</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Standard</b>	<b>OPM General Schedule Evaluation Guide (April 1998)</b>
<b>Factor</b>	<b>Factor 3, Supervisory and Managerial Authority Exercised</b>
<b>Issue</b>	<b>Crediting Levels 3-4 and 3-3b</b>
<b>Other References</b>	<b>N/A</b>

### **Identification of the Classification Issue**

The appellant in this case supervised a total of 16 administrative and support positions engaged in realty and budgeting operations, through one subordinate supervisor and two positions described as "team leaders". The subordinate supervisory position managed the realty work of the organization, and supervised eight employees. The subordinate "team leaders" each assigned and reviewed the work of budget analysts and budget assistants, and provided technical assistance to them, although these leadership responsibilities comprised less than 20 percent of their time. The appellant argued that the supervisory and managerial authority she exercised through subordinate leadership positions warranted evaluation at Level 3-4 for Factor 3 (Supervisory and Managerial Authority Exercised) under the General Schedule Supervisory Guide (GSSG).

### **Resolution**

Under Factor 3, Level 3-4 in the GSSG, positions must first fully meet the criteria contained in Levels 3-3a and 3-3b. Level 3-3a essentially concerns managerial positions closely involved with high level program officials in the development of overall goals and objectives for assigned staff functions, programs or program segments. CPMS determined that the appellant's responsibilities fell significantly short of this criteria. The appealed position did not meet Level 3-3a.

CPMS then compared the appellant's supervisory duties against the requirements of Level 3-3b. CPMS factfinding revealed that the "team leaders" functioned more as senior specialists than as extensions of the supervisor in terms of exercising leadership responsibility. Thus, CPMS determined that those positions were not considered equivalent to the team leaders, supervisors, group chiefs, or other positions identified in the delegated authorities described at Level 3-3b. Rather, the appellant functioned as full first-line supervisor over the employees of the budget section in her organization. Moreover, CPMS determined that the appellant's organization as a whole lacked the highly complex operations, unusual rate of change, extraordinary difficulties in training subordinates or assessing their work accomplishments, and similar attributes that would suggest a need for multiple subordinate supervisors or leaders, as required at Level 3-3b.

While the appellant was credited with exercising some of Level 3-3b's authorities, she neither exercised the required majority (8 of 15), or supervised an organization approximating a second-level supervisory situation by placing similar demands on her. The position did not meet Level 3-3b.

Because the appealed position did not meet either Levels 3-3a or 3-3b, it was inappropriate to further consider Level 3-4. CPMS evaluated the appealed position at Level 3-2c.

<b>Case Number</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Standards</b>	(a) OPM PCS for Miscellaneous Administrative and Program Series, GS-301, January 1979 (b) OPM PCS for Personnel Management Series, GS-201, Part II, June 1966
<b>Factor</b>	N/A
<b>Issue</b>	<b>Determining series for command level positions involved in evaluating Nonappropriated Fund (NAF) personnel programs</b>
<b>Other References</b>	N/A

### **Identification of the Classification Issue**

This appellant evaluated the NAF personnel programs and provided policy interpretation and guidance to appropriated fund (APF) and NAF personnel within a command. In addition, the appellant spent 25 percent of her time as a quality management advisor for her directorate, providing a variety of advice and support regarding implementation of total quality principles and processes. The position was classified locally as a Human Resources Officer, GS-301-12. Although the appellant did not dispute the series of her position, CPMS questioned the applicability of the Miscellaneous Administrative and Program Series, GS-301 to the position.

### **Resolution**

The GS-301 series is appropriate for positions that meet two criteria: (1) their primary work is of an administrative, two-grade interval nature, and (2) their primary work is not classifiable in any other series. Positions involving mixtures of work classifiable in more than one occupational series should be classified in the series appropriate for the paramount qualifications required. If those qualifications requirements are equally important, the position should be classified in the series appropriate to the grade controlling duties. If the grade level of those duties is equal, the position should be classified in any of the series involved that would provide a satisfactory recruiting base. Only in rare cases will none of qualifications provide an adequate recruitment avenue. It is in these instances when the GS-301 series should be considered as a final recourse.

CPMS factfinding revealed that appellant's program evaluation responsibilities covered position classification, employee relations, labor relations, employee development, and staffing specialties, as they related to appropriated and nonappropriated funded personnel within her command. The appellant developed supplemental and interpretative guidance, conducted staff assistance visits throughout the command to evaluate personnel program effectiveness and compliance with agency directives governing NAF personnel management and administration, and took steps to assure compliance with various assessment reports. Specific areas of attention included affirmative employment, employee selection, negotiated agreements, job design, work distribution, pay, and discipline and motivational taskings of employees. The appellant also served as technical consultant to the command director on all aspects of the NAF personnel system, and advised personnel within the subordinate command activities on the utilization of sound human resources management practices. The appellant was held responsible for helping the command achieve a fully integrated, economical, and effective NAF human resource program.

CPMS determined that extensive experience and skill in interpreting and applying applicable personnel service regulations, instructions, and procedures were prerequisites for successful performance in the appealed position. Factfinding confirmed that the appellant applied an extensive knowledge of position

classification, employee development, employee relations, labor relations, and staffing principles, in carrying out her evaluative and advisory services. CPMS found that the required skills and knowledge, and duties and responsibilities of the position compared favorably to the Personnel Management Series, GS-201, which includes positions which either (1) direct or assist in directing a personnel management program, or (2) advise on, supervise, perform or provide staff leadership and technical guidance for work which involves two or more specialized personnel management functions, or (3) perform specialized personnel management work not covered by other series in the GS-200 occupational group. CPMS concluded that the appellant's emphasis on nonappropriated fund personnel program management matters provided no basis for exclusion from the GS-201 series. While different regulations and requirements govern personnel management within the NAF and APF systems, there are sufficient underlying similarities to warrant classifying positions such as the appellant's within the GS-200 occupational group.

CPMS changed the series of the appealed position to GS-201. Because the appellant applied significant levels of knowledge and skill in multiple personnel specialties, CPMS assigned the title Personnel Management Specialist to the position.

<b>Case Number</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Standards</b>	<b>(a) OPM PCS for Housing Management Series, GS-1173, September 1981 (b) OPM PCS for Miscellaneous Administrative and Program Series, GS-301, January 1979</b>
<b>Factor</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>Issue</b>	<b>Determining series for Housing Referral Officer positions</b>
<b>Other References</b>	<b>N/A</b>

### **Identification of the Classification Issue**

The appellant in this case served as the installation housing referral officer, with responsibility for providing assistance to military members, their families, and eligible civilians in locating off-post housing. The appellant also developed the family housing portion of a daily in-processing brief to new arrivals at the installation, which contained information about the entire family housing operations. In addition, the appellant provided information to relocating personnel on housing procedures at other military activities, was often called upon to review new or proposed regulations, guidance, or policies that addressed housing referral and relocation matters, and had performed a variety of special projects involving on- and off-installation housing issues. The appellant argued that the local decision to classify his position in the Miscellaneous Administration and Program Series, GS-301, was erroneous because he performed numerous duties that were clearly covered by the Housing Management Series, GS-1173.

### **Resolution**

Specifically excluded from the GS-1173 series are "positions the duties of which are to administer, supervise, or perform work which involves (a) locating and maintaining listings of adequate, suitable, and economical nondiscriminatory housing for rental or sale; (b) providing information and assistance to military and civilian employees of Federal agencies and departments in locating such housing; and (c) promoting equal opportunity in housing policy in communities adjacent to Federal installations."

CPMS found that the appellant performed a combination of work, some of which was covered by the GS-1173 standard, and some of which was excluded. However, factfinding revealed that the appellant

performed duties directly related to housing referral services approximately 85% of the time. Absent the specific responsibility for managing government owned housing assets, the appellant's housing referral duties could not be classified into the GS-1173 series. CPMS acknowledged that the review, analysis, and interpretation of policy and regulations impacting the operations of the entire housing operations at the installation; the preparation and presentation of housing briefings to new arrivals; and the occasional performance of special projects dealing with the overall housing program did, in fact, meet the criteria for coverage by the GS-1173 series. But since these duties comprised less than 25% of the appellant's duty time, they could not control the grade of the appealed position.

The exclusionary statement in the GS-1173 standard states that positions involved in housing referral work are to be classified in the General Administrative, Clerical, and Office Services Group, GS-300, but does not suggest a specific occupational series. The appellant was responsible for administering the installation housing referral program, which required knowledge of Federal, DoD, state, and local housing laws and statutes, to include those regarding housing discrimination and equal opportunity. In addition, the appellant applied knowledge of administrative and management practices and techniques in order to effectively oversee the housing referral program, which provided a variety of services to a large customer population. CPMS determined this work to be two-grade interval in nature, and found the Miscellaneous Administrative and Program Series, GS-301 to be the most appropriate series for the appealed position.